



May 30, 2019

**Via Electronic Filing**

Ms. Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12th Street, S.W.  
Washington D.C., 20554

Re: Notice of Ex-Parte Communication, CG Docket No. 17-59, WC Docket No. 17-97

Dear Ms. Dortch:

On May 28, 2019, Rebekah Johnson, CEO of Numeracle, Inc., Steve Akers, VP of Engineering at Appriss Inc. and David Richerson, Director of IT at Appriss Inc. met with Zenji Nakazawa, advisor to Chairman Pai, and Jerusha Burnett of the Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau. They also met separately with Travis Littman, advisor to Commissioner Rosenworcel. The purpose of these meetings was to discuss the Commission's efforts to combat illegal and unwanted robocalls and authentication caller ID technologies and the possible blocking of certain critical (and potentially life-saving) voice notifications provided by Appriss.

Numeracle is the pioneer of call blocking and labeling visibility and control in the new calling ecosystem, providing actionable strategies for businesses whose legal calls have been improperly blocked or labeled as illegal robocalls. By working with major carriers, analytics companies, app developers, device manufacturers, and industry leaders, Numeracle delivers a path to call labeling control for call originators across the healthcare, retail, safety, government, utility, broadcast, financial, and resort industries.

Appriss delivers voice notifications to users who have registered for a service called VINE. VINE is a free, nationwide, state-sponsored solution that lets victims of crime and other concerned citizens access timely and reliable information regarding the status of offenders in the jail system. Appriss provides over 20 million registered users this vital information each year. It receives data from over 4000 agencies, jails, departments of corrections, etc. from around the country with updated custody status on offenders in the system. When an offender's status changes (paroled, released, transferred, etc.), then a voice call goes out to the registrant that must be acknowledged with a 4-digit PIN in most cases.

We raised concerns about the use of analytics by voice service providers to perform default blocking on an opt-out basis for consumers. In the attachment presented, evidence was provided around how calls that consumers want to receive are frequently erroneously labeled as "Scam" or "Spam." Allowing voice service providers to block communications by default on an opt-out basis based on varied analytics

would create inconsistencies, as identical lawful (requested) calls from the same caller are rated inconsistently even by the same analytics entity. The attached presentation shows that calls from seven phone numbers from the same caller were rated anywhere from low to high risk. One analytics entity rated calls from the same calling campaign by one company all the way from low risk to high risk.

Additionally, carriers and their analytics partners do not inform legal callers of how their calls are labeled and/or blocked. Because of these errors and lack of feedback from carriers and their partners to lawful callers, the voice channel will be rendered a less effective means of communication because consumers will not receive voice communications, not just from companies they do business with, but also from vital service providers like Appriss that have been entrusted to convey critical information.

The draft order plays fast and loose with the terms “illegal call” and “unwanted call.” The Commission has never fully defined these terms. The same sales call that is illegal if the customer has not consented to receive it is perfectly legal with customer consent. Every customer will have his/her own definition of an “unwanted call.”

Appriss, each day on average, makes 120,000 calls to deliver 10,000-12,000 unique notifications across 48 states with call patterns that align with those noted in paragraph 34 of the draft order. As provided in the attached, Appriss’s VINE offender notifications are currently being labeled as a Scam or Spam by analytics based on the proprietary algorithms. Numeracle supports providing customers with accurate labeling information so they can make informed decisions about whether to answer a call or have certain categories blocked based on their individual preferences.

The FCC is interrupting a 90-year requirement of call completion to allow unrestricted blocking based on the undefined term “unwanted call” that inevitably will vary for every consumer. To implement such an option will require voice service providers to provide refined categories and accurate labeling with the inclusion of consumer personal preference. For the last few years, the FCC has reinforced that carriers cannot engage in unreasonable call blocking of calls to rural carriers, yet now is authorizing wide scale, standardless blocking based on undefined criteria. It is unreasonable to allow carriers to block based on any analytics designed to identify unwanted calls without recourse for blocked legal and wanted calls. The Commission should consider the inevitable false positives that have and will continue to result on a grander scale with the default opt-out approach.

While Numeracle fully supports the deployment of STIR/SHAKEN by voice service providers, I noted this is not a solution to identify “legal vs. illegal” or “wanted vs unwanted” calls. STIR/SHAKEN was designed to provide consistent traceback to determine the originating carrier, but STIR/SHAKEN does not determine whether a call is legal or illegal or wanted or unwanted. The need for analytics will remain, but an even more pressing need is the ability for legal callers to identify to carriers and their analytics partners that they are making lawful and proper calls from telephone numbers they are authorized to use.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rebekah Johnson', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Rebekah Johnson, CEO  
Numeracle, Inc.  
McLean, VA  
rebekah@numeracle.com

Cc (via email)

Travis Littman  
Zenji Nakazawa  
Jerusha Burnett



## FCC Meeting

May 28, 2019



# Victim Information and Notification Everyday



## What is VINE?

VINE is a solution that lets victims of crime and other concerned citizens access timely and reliable information regarding offenders. It is offered free of charge to registrants, is completely confidential, and features multiple language support.

Offering peace of mind, the VINE service lets victims call a toll-free number, visit [vinelink.com](http://vinelink.com), or use the VINELink™ mobile app to anonymously check on an offender's custody status.

Victims can also register to receive automated notifications about changes in that status via their choice of format: phone, email, or text. TTY (hearing impaired) service is also available.

## VINE Coverage and Reach

VINE provides offender custody status information to over 20 million U.S. civilians annually.



### 48 STATES

VINE is currently available in 48 states nationwide, with 41 of these states using VINE in every one of its counties.



### 2900+ AGENCIES

Over 2,900 State and County government agencies share up-to-date incarceration and criminal justice data with the VINE system.



### 49+ MILLION SEARCHES

VINE users conducted nearly 50 million offender and case searches in 2016.



### 40 MILLION NOTIFICATIONS

The VINE system delivers over 40 million notifications to victims and concerned citizens annually.



## The History of VINE

Murder victim not told suspect was out on bail

Mary Byron had been raped, assaulted, and stalked by her former boyfriend in late 1993. He was arrested and jailed for these crimes, but someone posted his bail and he was released. There was no way for Mary to know.

On the evening of December 6, 1993, Mary sat in her car as it warmed up after leaving her job at the local mall in Louisville, KY. Her former boyfriend approached from the driver's side and fired seven bullets into her head and chest at point blank range, killing her. It was Mary's 21st birthday.

The community was stunned and outraged. County officials and engineers worked diligently to design a system that would let crime victims know whether their offenders are in jail, where they are held, and when they are released.

Exactly one year after Mary's murder, Jefferson County, Kentucky became the first community to institute automated telephone notification for crime victims and other concerned citizens. That system is VINE™ – Victim Information and Notification Everyday, now used in thousands of communities across the nation.



# Keeping Victims Safe



10 million

arrest events managed each year



40 million total notifications delivered

31 million are phone notifications

3 million victims registered

48 states nationwide

73 total customers

## WHAT PEOPLE ARE SAYING: VICTIMS

*"VINE allowed me to track where my ex-husband was. I found out when he went from one prison to another and was called within 15 minutes of his release. I felt safer because I knew. It's real important that victims know where their perpetrators are and VINE is here to help them do that."*

– Sexual Assault Survivor

# Testimonials



## **Oklahoma Survey:**

I received timely updates about the moving, and releasing of my abusive ex husband, and I'm grateful for this service so I didn't need to look over my shoulder, at least until 30 days from now or so.

The offender who murdered my sister was moved to a facility in preparation for release. I was notified of the movement and the actual release date. Super simple and informing. Thank you.

Thanks very much for the notifications. I only have peace of mind knowing that the offender is locked up and can't both us. At least we know when he is getting out and we can take precautions for our safety from him.

## **Washington Survey:**

I daily search for my son. Homeless, an addict with significant MH issues. Yesterday, thanks to this program, I know where my son is. God bless all of you and your work. I can not understand his crime but it's a blessing to know as a mother he is still alive and where he is. I Sincerely regret the circumstances for all of us and victims for where it is I finally found him. Thank you for your extraordinary services.

I love this, and that I'm able to be notified of any custody changes rather than checking the roster every 5 minutes. Thank you for this tool, it's very resourceful!

It is a relief to know where my ex is & also when he is released from jail. I can be on high alert when I know he is out and about. Since he has a total disregard for the restraining order put in place to protect me & our family from his dangerous behavior. The Vine alert has been extremely helpful! Thank you!

## **Arkansas Survey:**

I appreciate all the Arkansas VINE notification system does in order to help provide a sense of security and safety for the victims and those dealing with the victims. With notification, one is able to prepare hearings, transfers, releases, etc... which is very important for the victims. Having notification through phone, email, and text is a great plus. Thank you for all you do.

I truly appreciate the reliable service provided by VINE. We receive VINE notifications way ahead of those by the DOC and that allows us to plan our meeting with the parole board. Thank you for the wonderful job you do.

This service serves to give my family and myself a form of safety as to the knowledge and whereabouts of the person who committed a horrible crime.

Thank you so much for your service. They have eased my mind beyond belief. And there is always someone very polite and willing to help when I needed it. Thanks again.

I truly appreciate the notifications so we all know the timing of possible releases so we can prepare to stay and protect our children and possessions from this guy.

## **Kentucky Survey:**

VINE saved our life. My family registered to receive calls so that we would know when my violent brother was released from jail. We received the call and as expected, less than an hour later he was at our home trying to break in and threatening us. The VINE call allowed us to be prepared with the police on standby.



# Testimonials



## Utah Survey:

I'm preparing for the offenders retaliation for my testimony.

I am grateful for the notification from VINE so I knew that this offender was picked up by ICE and transferred to County Jail. This offender scares me and I am afraid she will do something to me or my family or coerce someone she knows to do something to me or my family. Knowing where she is incarcerated gives me some peace of mind. Being notified if and when she gets out of jail will help me and my family to be more vigilant about our safety.

Being notified about my offenders was a god send because I knew they were released and I could be aware of my surroundings and it was a relief to know they were released because I know what the offenders are capable of.

Vine services help me feel safe by always letting me know very quickly any changes that happen with the offender.

It is a relief to have the information request fulfilled without me having to chase around and make call after call and wait on hold only to be rerouted or told IDK. VINE is convenient and a time saver for me, the mother.

The gift of time to prepare one's self mentally, and have time to notify neighbors and co-workers, is a HUGE blessing.

I appreciate knowing where the offender is located and that he has not been released. I also appreciated the information and help I received at the time of the offender's hearing several years ago.

## Other Testimonials:

"VINE means safety for our victims out there, giving them some sort of empowerment to be able to feel safe, to go on with their life."

**GAIL BRIMNER**

*Victim Service Unit, Alaska DOC*

"VINE is so critical to the victims' well-being.

I know from personal experience that VINE gave me such peace of mind and allowed me to concentrate on other areas of my life that were so critical. It was reassuring to know that this service was available to keep me informed. THANK YOU for VINE!!!"

**VINE USER**

"VINE lets me sleep at night. I no longer have to feel as if I am helpless and no one else could ever understand what my family and I have been through and will continue to endure daily."

**RACHEL**

*Mother of murder victim*

"I've had victims who were walking through the mall and thought for a minute that they saw their offender. They became frightened and called VINE and sure enough were able to get confirmation that the offender was in custody."

**JANET KOUPASH**

*Director of Victim Services, New York State DOCS*

"The VINE system will no doubt save lives because it allows people to be notified right away."

**STOKEY BOURQUE**

*Victim/Witness Coordinator, Tennessee*



**LOUISVILLE, KY** — Around 9:30 p.m. Saturday, police were called to the 9400 block of Plumwood Road in the Fern Creek area.

According to police, a man in his 30s had been shot in the chest. That man, whose identity has not yet been released by the coroner, died on the way to the hospital.

"Marie," speaking under the condition her real name not be used, told WLKY her ex had forced his way into her home that night.

"I'm trying to process it all right now. It's something that's very difficult for me to process. It's not a situation I wanted to end the way it did. At all," she told WLKY.

According to police, Marie had taken out emergency protective orders and domestic violence orders against her ex. He had been on home incarceration, but police say an escape warrant had been issued in his name Friday.

Marie said that was the day she got a notification from VINE—an automated victim notification system. She said she sprang into action when she learned he had cut off his ankle monitoring bracelet.

"I called my best friend and told her to come pick my up my babies and go to my mother's house. We enacted our safety plan that we came up with when we were at the domestic violence shelter," Marie said.

The VINE system was launched statewide in the mid 90s, thanks in part to the persistence of Pat and John Byron. Their daughter, Mary, was shot and killed on her 21st birthday as she left work at Mall St. Matthews.

Her former boyfriend had been released from jail, but Mary and her family had no way of knowing.

That was not the case for Marie, who told WLKY, "I would say VINE saved my life. To that family, I'm sorry for their loss. I couldn't imagine, but I thank them for putting that in place."

## QUERY CNAM

5022

[Query CNAM](#)Number searched: **15022**Queries remaining this minute: **1**Queries remaining today: **24**

Standard Length CNAM:

Victim Informat

Extended Length CNAM:

Victim Information and Notification  
Everyday**TrueSpam score: 100**

Directory / 502

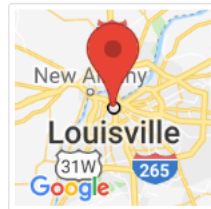
(502) 2 [redacted]

MEDIUM RISK



### Scam Protection

YouMail users report this number may be a scam.



Louisville, KY US

### Customer Call

Get All Info on 502-213-2798 →

### Typical Messages



This is Jeff I'm calling with the information you requested from the New York State wide victim information and notification service. Please listen carefully to this message. You are registered with us to receive updates about an offender who's name is \*\*\*\* with offender ID \*\*\*\*\*.



Service. Please listen carefully to this message you may want to have a pen and paper handy. After the message you'll be asked to enter your four digit pin to prevent repeated calls to this telephone number. If you have received this notification in error please call the Florida State Wide vine Service at 1-877-846-3435. Press zero to speak directly with a vine operator. You are registered with us to receive updates about an offender who's last name is \*\*\*\*\* and who's first name is \*\*\*\*\*. This offender's number is \*\*\*\*\*. I'm calling to tell you that there has been a change in this offender's custody status this offender is under the supervision of the Florida Department of Corrections. For more information you can contact the supervising officer during regular business hours. The telephone number is 954-924-3800. That number again 954-924-3800. This message will automatically repeat if you don't need to hear the message again press two. You are registered with us to receive updates about an offender who's last name is \*\*\*\*\* and who's first name is \*\*\*\*\*. This offender's number is 552563. I'm calling to tell you that there has been a change in this offender's custody status this offender is under the supervision of the Florida Department of Corrections. For more information you can contact the supervising officer during regular business hours. The telephone number is 954-924-3800. That number again 954-924-3800. To hear this notification message again press one otherwise press two. To hear this

### Reverse Phone Lookup

502-2 [redacted]



Powered By  BeenVerified

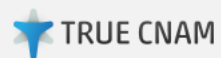
### TYPE PHONE NUMBER

Search For Owner Full Name,  
Full Address, Relatives & More!

Example: (123) 456-7890

( [input type="text"/> ) [input type="text"/> - [input type="text"/>

Search



## QUERY CNAM

87784 [redacted] [Query CNAM](#)

Number searched: **18778** [redacted]

Queries remaining this minute: **1**  
Queries remaining today: **22**

No CNAM record was found in our database.

Is this your number? You can [add it here](#).

**TrueSpam score: 100**



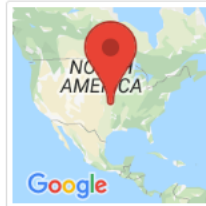
(877) 84[REDACTED]

MEDIUM RISK



### Scam Protection

YouMail users report this number may be a scam.



### General Alert

Get All Info on 877-846-3435 →

### Typical Messages



Service. Please listen carefully to this message you may want to have a pen and paper handy. After the message you'll be asked to enter your four digit pin to prevent repeated calls to this telephone number. If you have received this notification in error please call the Florida State Wide vine Service at 1-877-84[REDACTED] to speak directly with a vine operator. You are registered with us to receive updates about an offender who's last name is \*\*\*\*\* and who's first name is \*\*\*\*\*. This offender's number is \*\*\*\*\*. I'm calling to tell you that there has been a change in this offender's custody status this offender is under the supervision of the Florida Department of Corrections. For more information you can contact the supervising officer during regular business hours. The telephone number is 954-924-3800. That number again 954-924-3800. This message will automatically repeat if you don't need to hear the message again press two. You are registered with us to receive updates about an offender who's last name is \*\*\*\*\* and who's first name is \*\*\*\*\*. This offender's number is 552563. I'm calling to tell you that there has been a change in this offender's custody status this offender is under the supervision of the Florida Department of Corrections. For more information you can contact the supervising officer during regular business hours. The telephone number is 954-924-3800. That number again 954-924-3800.

To hear this notification message again press one otherwise press two. To hear this notification message again press one otherwise press two. To hear this notification message again press one otherwise press two. I'm sorry I'm having trouble completing this process for you. I'll repeat this call after waiting for two hours. If you are attempting to enter your pin. This will give you time to locate your pin or to contact the person who is registered until the pin is entered.

### Reverse Phone Lookup

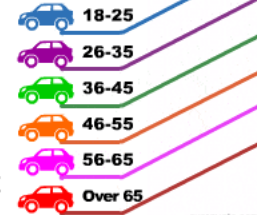
877-84[REDACTED]



### Mc Lean, VA:

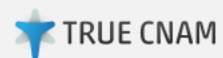
Did You  
Know If You  
Have No  
Tickets In 3  
Years, We  
Hope You  
Know This  
Genius Tip

TAP YOUR  
AGE:



CALCULATE  
COVERAGE

everquote.com



## QUERY CNAM

8778 [redacted]

Query CNAM

Number searched: **18778** [redacted]

Queries remaining this minute: **1**  
Queries remaining today: **21**

No CNAM record was found in our database.

Is this your number? You can [add it here](#).

**TrueSpam score: 0**

## TYPE PHONE NUMBER

Search For Owner Full Name,  
Full Address, Relatives & More!

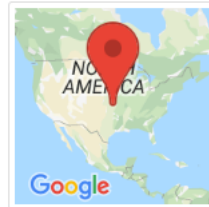
Powered By 

▶ Example: (123) 456-7890 (  )  -

Search

Directory / 877

(877) 84



### General Alert

Get All Info on 877-846-3465 →

### Typical Message



This is State Wide vine Service. Please listen carefully to this message you may want to have a pen and paper handy. After the message you'll be asked to enter your four digit pin to prevent repeated calls to this telephone number. You are registered with us to receive updates about a defendant who's last name is spelled LU.



### Reports

 Spam



After the message you'll be asked to enter your four digit pin to prevent repeated calls to this telephone number. You are registered with us to receive updates about an offender who's last name is Phillips PHILLIPS and whose first name is Eric. This offender's SPI number is 000360209E. I'm calling to tell you that there has been a change in this offender's custody status this offender was transferred to a community assessment Center. And is in custody at Talbot Hall. The transfer took place on August 7 2018. The offender will be at this assessment center for approximately 60 to 90 days before go into a

### Reverse Phone Lookup

877-84



Powered By 

## TYPE PHONE NUMBER

Search For Owner Full Name,  
Full Address, Relatives & More!

Example: (123) 456-7890

(  )  -

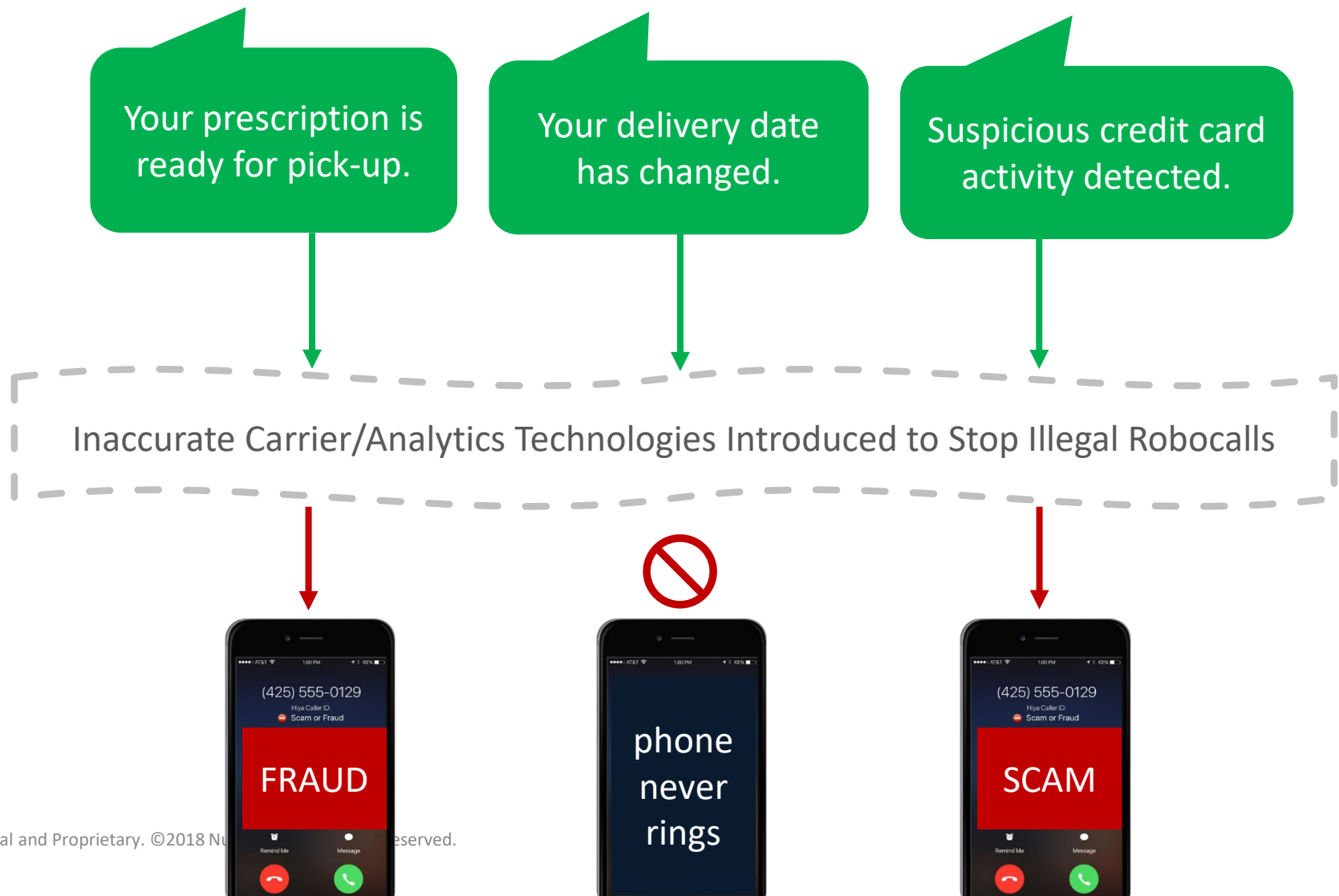
Search

# Numeracle



On a mission to establish trust in customer communications.

# Call Blocking & Labeling





# Retail/Customer Service

## Call Intent:

Customer service, consumer-requested call-backs

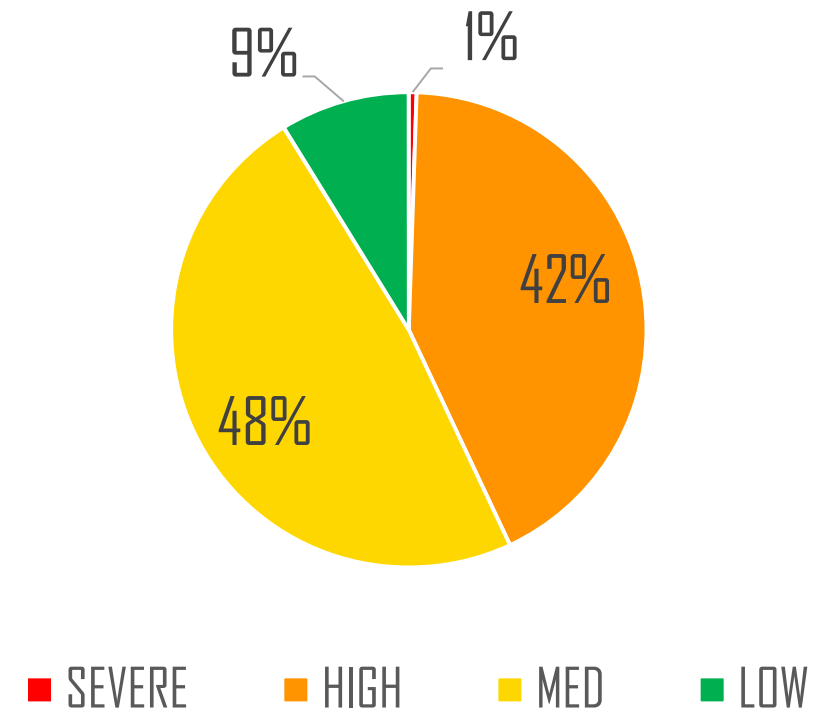
## Industry/Focus:

Home improvement retail, renovation, installation services, and supplies

## Size of Organization:

Fortune 100, publicly traded

## Number Risk Rating



*\*risk rating averaged across multiple sources*

# Analytics Inconsistencies: Retail/Customer Service

<u>Original TN</u>	<u>Analytics 1</u>	<u>Analytics 2</u>	<u>Analytics 3</u>
844-83#-####	Medium	No Rating	Medium
800-46#-####	High	Low	Medium
800-24#-####	Medium	High	Medium
800-91#-####	Medium	Medium	Low
512-87#-####	Medium	Low	Medium
770-65#-####	High	Low	Medium
866-64#-####	Medium	Medium	Low

# Cable/Internet Provider

## Call Intent:

Account services, new customer installations, sales, upgrades

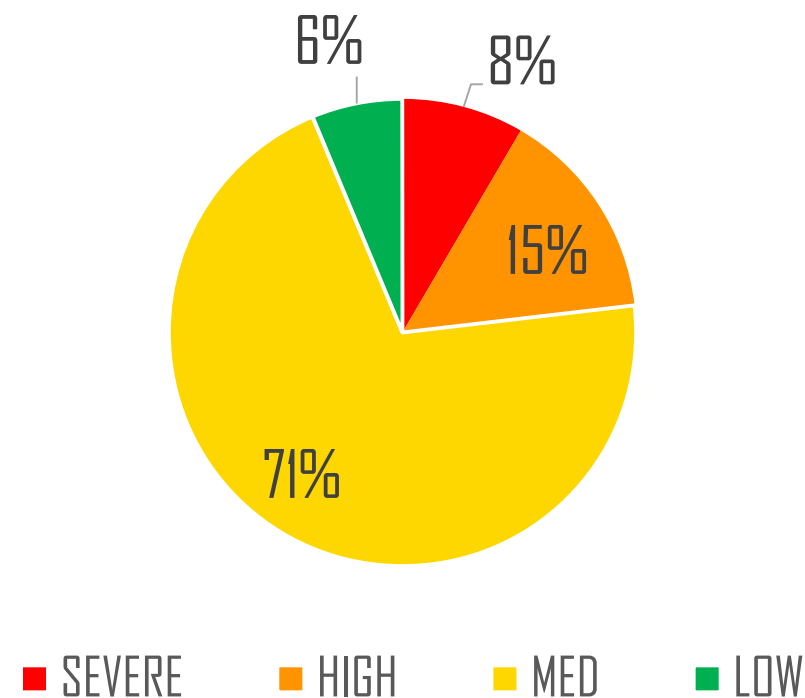
## Industry/Focus:

Cable, internet, phone service

## Size of Organizations:

Fortune 100, publicly traded; represents two of the largest nationwide broadcast brands

Number Risk Rating



*\*risk rating averaged across multiple sources*

# Analytics Inconsistencies: Cable/Internet Service

<u>Original TN</u>	<u>Analytics 1</u>	<u>Analytics 2</u>	<u>Analytics 3</u>
201-25#-####	Scam	None	None
877-67#-####	High	Low	High
844-34#-####	Low	None	None
844-30#-####	High	Scam	High
844-34#-####	Scam	None	None
844-34#-####	Low	None	High
866-63#-####	Low	None	High
855-71#-####	Scam	None	High
215-70#-####	Scam	High	None

# Collections/Account Resolution

## Call Intent:

1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Party Collections

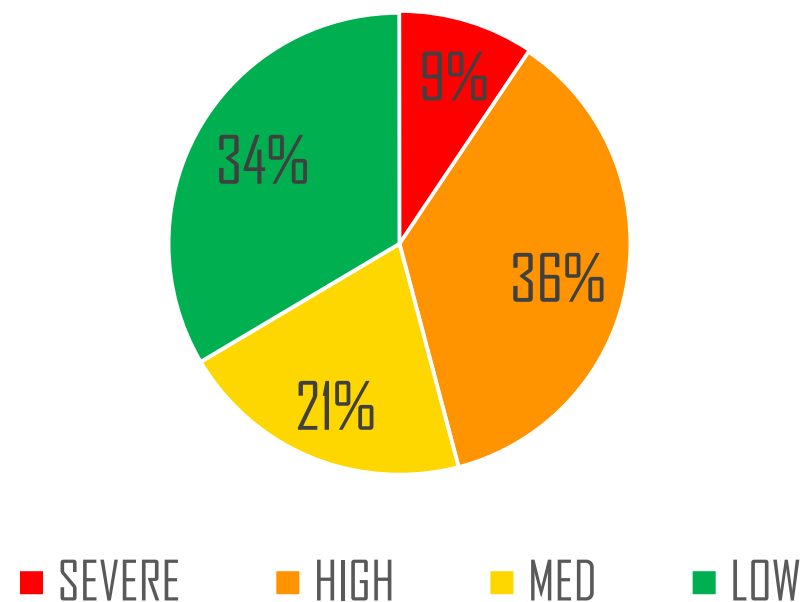
## Industry/Focus:

Commercial, government, and healthcare collections

## Size of Organizations:

Includes 5 organizations ranging from small, privately owned to large, publicly traded entities

Number Risk Rating



*\*risk rating averaged across multiple sources*

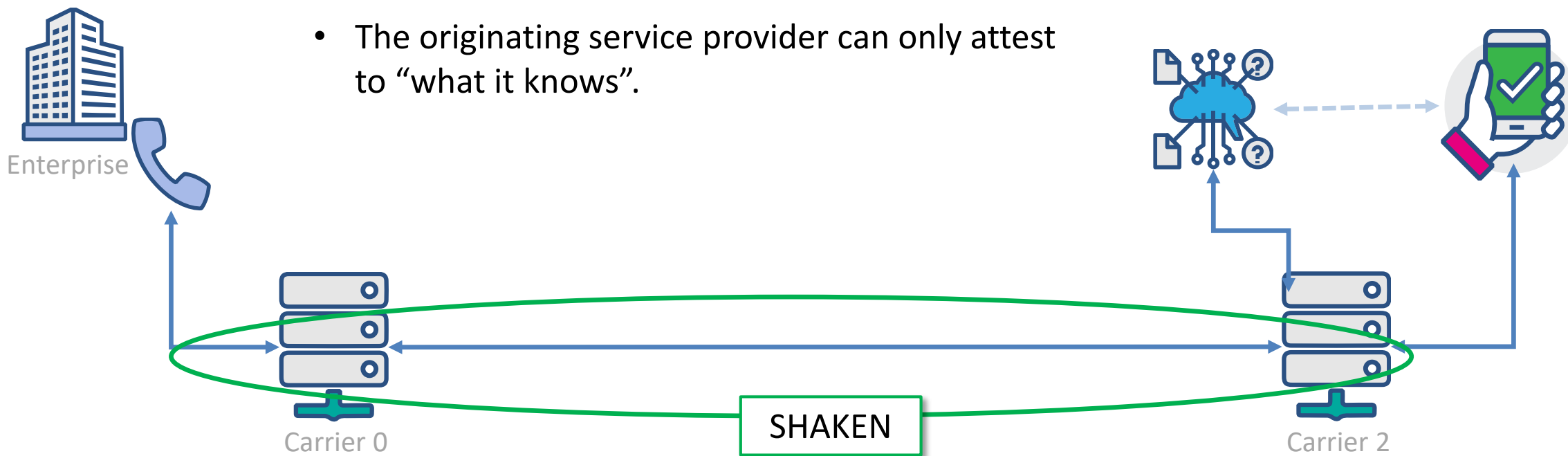


# Analytics Inconsistencies: Account Resolution

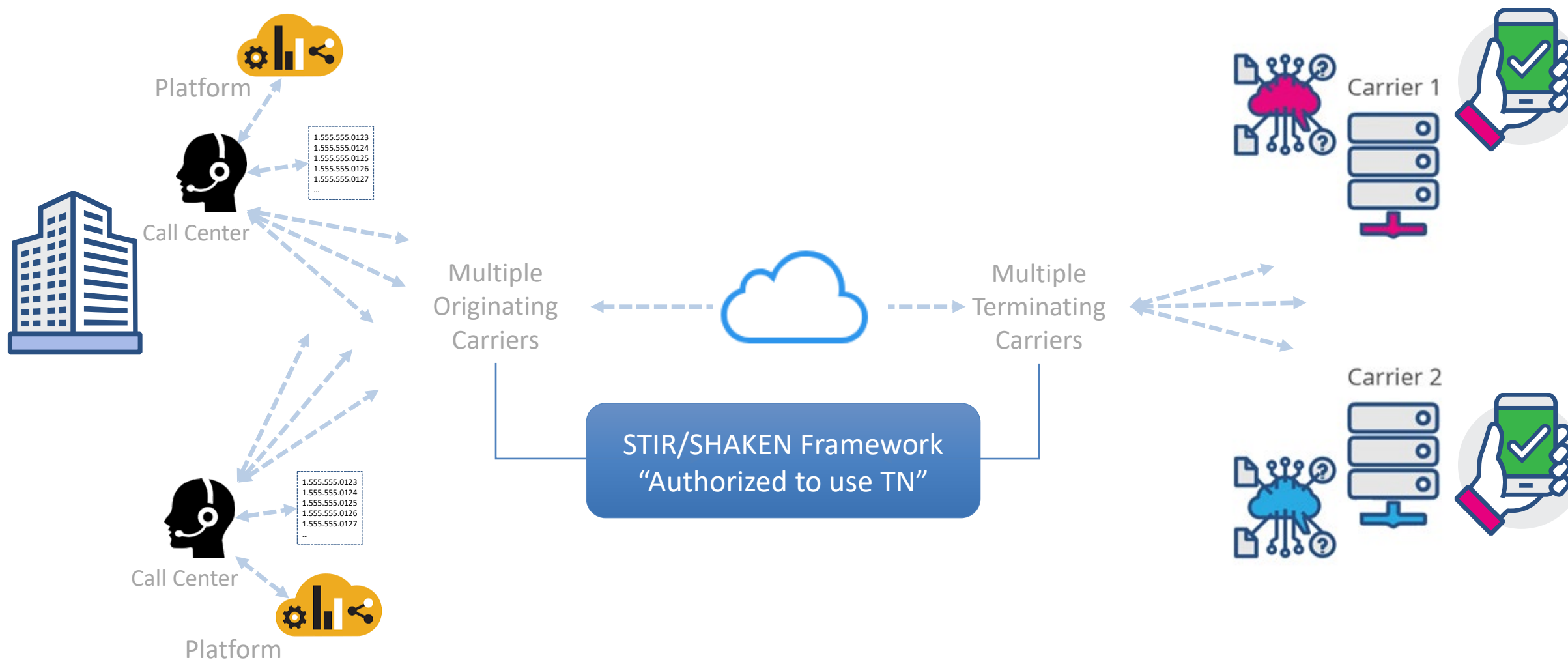
<u>Risk Ratings</u>	<u>Analytics 1</u> (Total TNs Ranked)	<u>Analytics 2</u> (Total TNs Ranked)	<u>Analytics 3</u> (Total TNs Ranked)	<u>Analytics 4</u> (Total TNs Ranked)
SEVERE	7	3	6	0
HIGH	16	22	18	13
MED	13	12	0	3
LOW	14	13	16	14

# SHAKEN

- SHAKEN verifies that the entity originating a call is entitled to use the phone number displayed – nothing more!
- SHAKEN builds on the information the originating carrier has about the calling party.
- The originating service provider can only attest to “what it knows”.

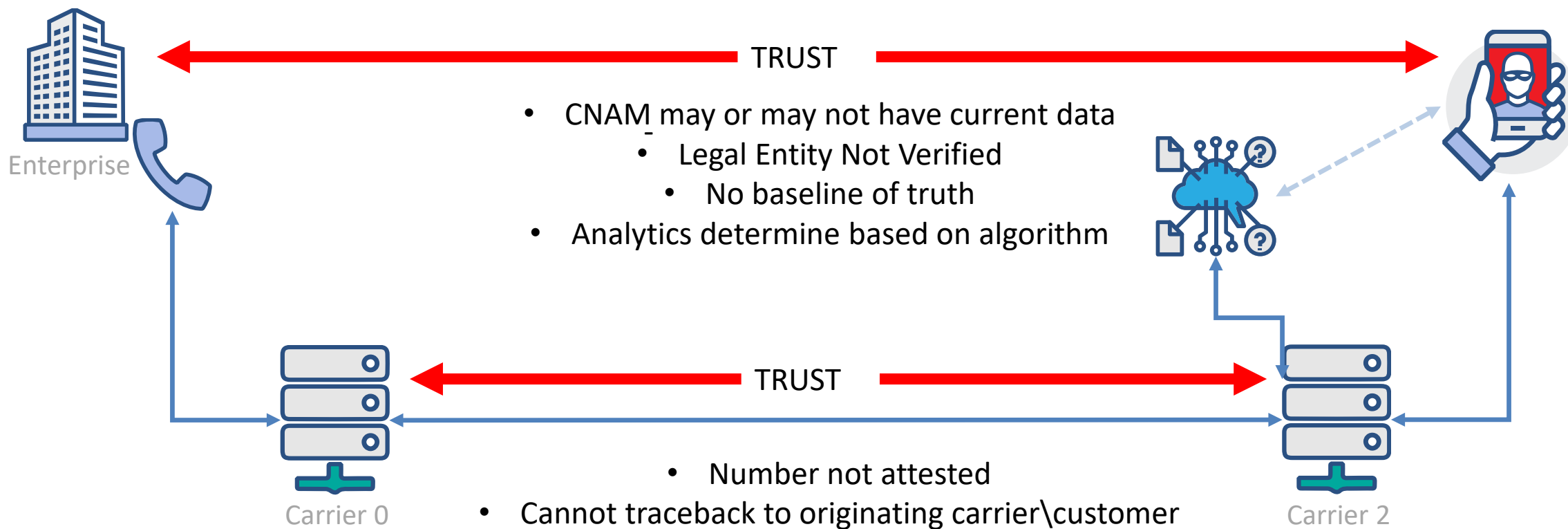


# SHAKEN



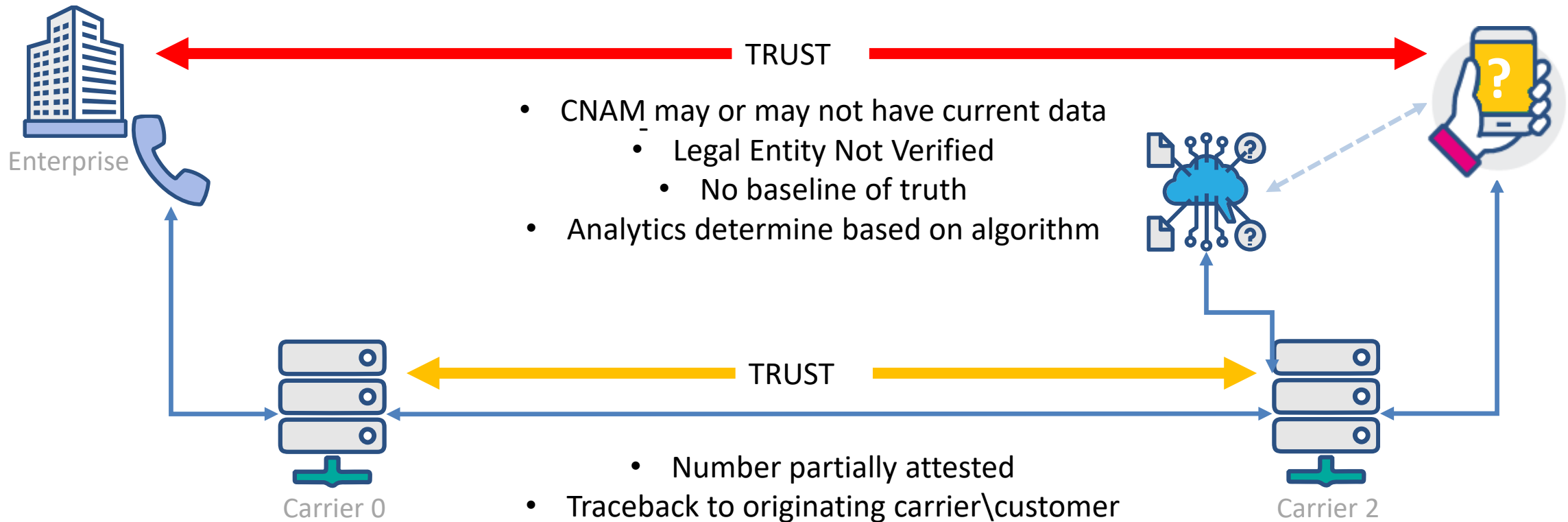
# Current Ecosystem

## No Trust Between Carriers and Enterprise



# SHAKEN with Partial Attestation

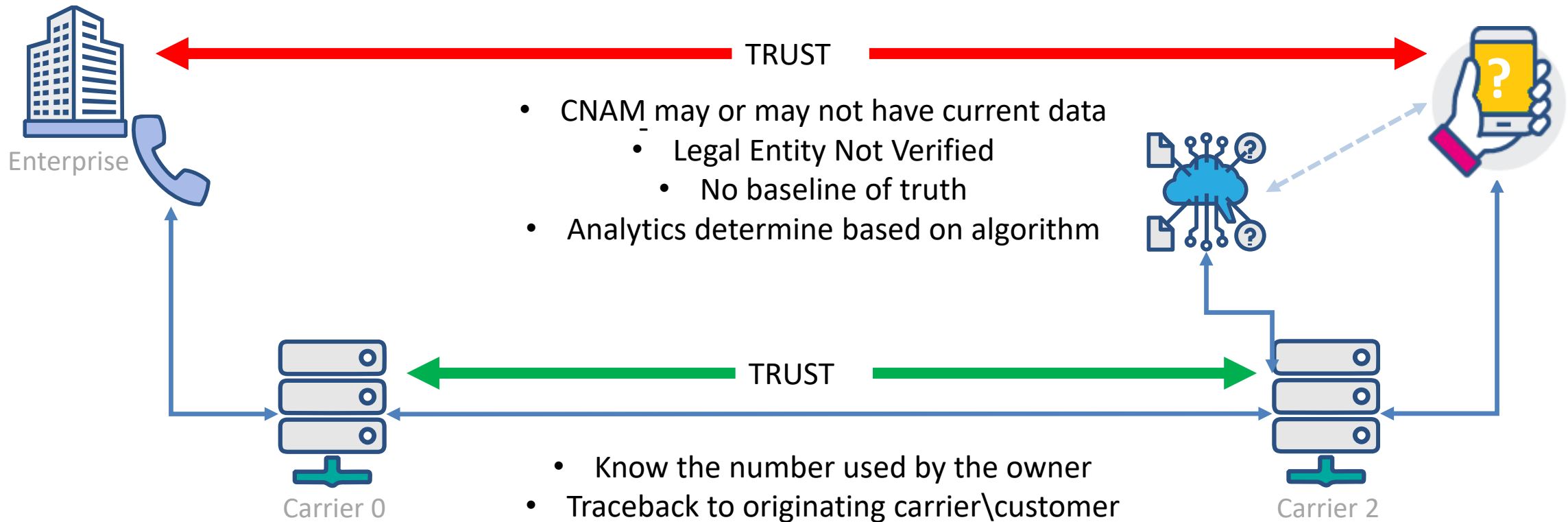
## Partial Trust Established Through SHAKEN ONLY





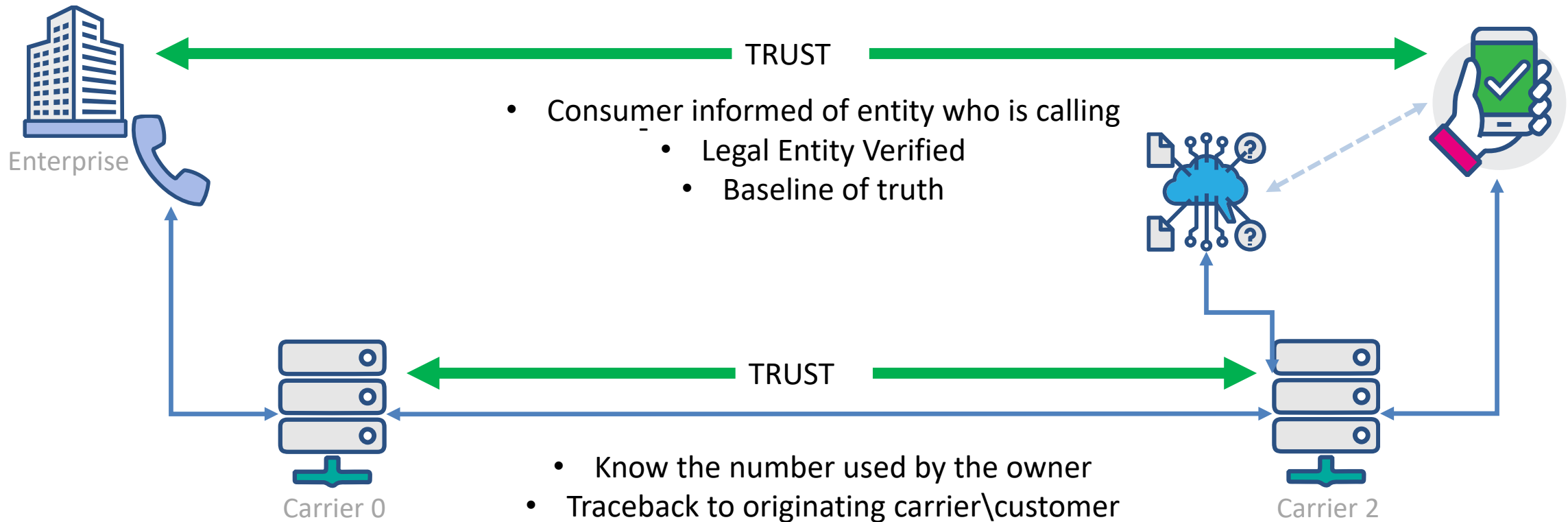
# SHAKEN with Full Attestation

## Trust Established Through SHAKEN ONLY



# SHAKEN + Vetted Entity

## Trust Established Through Know Your Customer & SHAKEN



# Known Entity



Authenticate



Verify



Audit for Compliance



Monitor Reputation



[www.numeracle.com](http://www.numeracle.com)